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instrument towards progress than it might be as an actual "end," its usefulness need not be restricted to its psychological effects. It will serve as a convenient measure by which advance may be determined and it will be a standard by which progress may be judged. But if this is one of its benefits it is likewise one of its dangers. For if we may estimate success by reference to a determined ideal, it will not really be a success unless in the process our ideal also has advanced. A plan can be of abiding value only if it is a growing plan.

To aim at an end is certainly necessary if we are to aim precisely and with adequate assurance, but if the end is a finish then it will have served only half its purpose. It is a process of reciprocal aid for which political thought must strive, in which imagination and intelligence fortify each other for their mutual advantage and hence for man's benefit.

JAMES GUTMANN.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.

AN OPPORTUNITY

To the JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY:

America is already playing a visible part in the destiny of Serbia. As a result of our common struggle, the Serbian race will be united in the free independent Yugoslavia, where all of us Serbs, the Croats and the Slovenes hope to find peace and an opportunity to pursue happiness and to contribute our modest share to the common civilization of mankind. But our needs—after the war—will be enormous, as our sacrifices during it have been of the heaviest. May I take advantage of your courtesy to draw the attention of your readers and contributors to a special need of the Yugoslavs which can be easily overlooked, but without the satisfaction of which much other assistance of a material order might prove futile.

Serbia and the Yugoslavs fight not only for their political and economic freedom. They are fighting not only for open ports, but also to come into free contact with the rest of the world, and so be able to exchange moral goods with the great and happier democracies of the West. Our first national need will be a new orientation and organization of our thinking. We have need of a national philosophy. We think that it can not be done successfully without the voluntary and sincere help of the American, British and French thinkers, scientists and philosophers. Therefore may I not appeal to such men in America to give a place in their thought to Serbia? They can help her very much in a practical way if they would write articles on the subjects they like most, but which can be immediately

applied to the life of a young struggling democracy which still has to find its way to a larger life of humanity. Such articles will be translated into the Serbo-Croatian language and published in a monthly magazine which I with some friends have arranged to start publishing as soon as our life in Serbia shall be restored.

V. R. SAVIC,

Commissioner of the Serbian Government

TO THE FRIENDS OF PHILOSOPHY IN AMERICA AND ELSEWHERE:

Everyone who regards life as the subject matter of philosophy must hope for Mr. Savic all encouragement and cooperation in the enterprise he has at heart; especially Americans, bred up, as we believe, with ideals of freedom, must be in hearty sympathy with such a purpose. While our friends in Serbia wish to develop in cooperation with the rest of a friendly world, exchanging experiences and ideas, their life will demand its own spontaneous sincerity, and it does seem as though philosophers in America ought to be able to offer some fruits of the freedom we admire.

No doubt many American writers can do so; but to what extent are they writers of "philosophy"? How many of us, the members of our philosophical associations, are ready with ideas that might assist in the intellectual and imaginative orientation of people so confident of their future, but obliged to build over again so much that has been destroyed? Perhaps many can do so; or if not, one explanation suggests itself at once. When the life of Serbia shall have won for itself a background analogous to our own, when the life of contemplation and analysis in the university of Belgrade shall be as complex and as professional as in our American universities, then, to be sure.

There is a good deal of truth in this, but there is much of naïveté. If our friends in Serbia put on our own burden of tradition, they will, no doubt, have to get rid of it by a similar travail of metaphysics; but as friends not alone of philosophy, but of freedom, we ought not to invite them to anything like that.

The journal that Mr. Savic hopes to establish does not, unfortunately, yet exist; we can not write for it. But all friends of progressive culture must desire its birthday, and wish to help it to prosperity and usefulness. We urge the friends of philosophy in America to consider how they may aid so excellent a cause.

W. T. BUSH.

To the JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY:

A new nation is simply a fresh experiment in that world-wide political laboratory wherein, since the beginning of civilization, the great research for Utopia has been going on. And now comes a representative of a particular new nation, Yugoslavia, with a declaration which, even in these astonishing days, makes us rub our eyes and ask whether we are awake. Here is a man who states that what a new nation needs above all things is a philosophy. And he asks help in this matter from America.

No! this is not a stroke of sardonic humor. It is a perfectly serious request. Yet, if we Americans have any humility left, it ought to cut us like the unconscious criticism of a child. Since when has America believed that a nation should be founded on the love of wisdom? The rôles should be reversed. This man has more to teach us than to learn from us. If he is in any way typical of his countrymen, the Yugoslavic experiment will be worth watching. Perhaps it is as true of nations as of men—our own early history suggests as much—that the child is father of the man.

But while this is the plain moral of the matter for us, to leave the thing here would be unjust to the serious character of Mr. Savic's proposal. Clearly Mr. Savic is not a man who needs to be reminded that the love of wisdom has no necessary connection with a hankering after a theory of reality (ontology, to use the ugly word itself), that the spirit of wisdom, since long before Socrates and Diogenes, has had a habit of assuming strange guises and lurking in out-of-the-way corners, that philosophy is not in the custody of the professional metaphysicians. Yet a Serbian might well not realize the extent to which the perversion of the word philosophy has gone among us—a perversion so absurd that if I pick off my shelves at random a history of "philosophy," I shall be likely to find forty pages devoted to the brain-spinnings of Leibnitz and less than forty words to the world-shattering doctrines of Rousseau; Hegel spread over a voluminous chapter, Nietzsche dismissed in a footnote; Herbert Spencer dissected at length and Samuel Butler not so much as mentioned (the last omission the more venial since the literary, the scientific, and the religious worlds have been as tardy as the philosophical in discovering Butler).

My idea, then, would be that Mr. Savic would do well to beware of trusting too much to merely professional publications, would do well to survey American periodical literature, both learned and popular, as widely as possible, picking out for translation articles of any character whatever which (1) reveal the presence of that impalpable something which betokens fervor for the truth, and which (2) are

sufficiently *human* in subject matter to fit Serbian as well as American readers and conditions, sufficiently *simple in expression* to make a wider than merely professional appeal, sufficiently *practical* to suggest points of application to the social and political problems of Yugoslavia. Articles—I care not what their subjects—that can pass these tests will be pretty certain to be philosophy. Conversely, might not American authors and scholars create more philosophy, if, before printing, they would subject their work to the difficult test: Would this help Serbia?

One further suggestion. America is fortunate in having produced as great a prophet of democracy as ever lived: Walt Whitman. If I were editing a journal in behalf of Serbian philosophy and democracy, I would not let a single issue appear that did not contain the translation of at least a few lines of Walt Whitman's wisdom.

HAROLD GODDARD.

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE.

To the JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY:

I suggest that it might put us in the way of helping in this good cause if we should determine to give in our various institutions a course on fundamental values of life as they appear to us in the light of the past four years, and on the important ends—social, educational, national, legal, economic, moral, religious—which we may reasonably work for after the war. Suppose we should drop—or hold in abeyance—for a time some questions we have loved, and follow the tradition of Plato and Aristotle, Locke, Descartes and Kant, not by discussing their problems, but by attacking the most vital public questions of our day. Might it not help American students, as well as possible readers among the Yugoslavs? And possibly our own thinking would profit if we should work in a field where we could not lean so heavily upon the past.

JAMES H. TUFTS.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.

To the JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY:

The letter of M. Savic, a voice, as it were, out of Macedonia, is such a challenge to American thinkers as should bring us, if not to offer the aid for which we are so little competent, at least to the public confession of our weakness and the honest man's effort to get free of it. As from the fine and affecting plea of M. Xavier Léon, last year, for the closer interchange of American and French thought, so here we are brought to face a self-accounting: what have

we to offer, we who bear the proud title of philosopher in the world's greatest republic, that is of social and moral and humane value to our fellows overseas in the year and the day of their stress and tribulation? "That philosophy is vain which eases no human ill,"—alas! it is always some Greek we must quote, even when we would set a measure for our own self-judgment. Balk at it we may not; the plain fact is that we in America are still but pale pensioners of European thought. The men of our race, Americans we call them, have undergone a tremendous social and physical experience in building up a new life in a new continent. But up to this hour, in an inner and profound sense, the meaning of this experience, in such form that it may be made vital and adaptable by men of other life in other lands, has found no expression. I am not forgetful of Emerson and James and Royce, nor doubtful of the genuineness of their Americanism; but who can pretend that they have given us such a glass of our reflective self as can show its unwavering line or depth? Their boldest strokes are still but faint tokens of the truth.

But if philosophy is with us thus inept and helpless there must be reasons therefor, which, through understanding, may indicate the paths of reform and rejuvenescence. Two, at least, of these are obvious.

Whereof the first is assuredly the narrowness and distortion which comes of a merely pedagogic horizon. American philosophers are teachers of philosophic tradition rather than formers of philosophic ideas. I do not mean to say that there is no inventiveness nor progress in our thinking; but that its main color and temper are determined, not by the life of the great society, but by the needs of the lecture-room. Where we should be leaders of public life, at least as being its heard critics, we are instead occupants of scholastic "chairs," heroes of seminars, and wordy astonishers of youth. In brief, we are teachers, not only before we are philosophers, but before we are citizens. This is, of course, no more true of professors of philosophy than of other professorial groups; but it is perhaps more damaging in the case of philosophy than with other forms of learning, for the very reason that the one pretension which can justify philosophy is the breadth and depth of the social and human experience upon which it builds. Not until we cease to be "professors" first and "philosophers" second, not until we free ourselves of scholastic seclusion and dependency and share with our fellow citizens the whole peril and adventure of civic creation, can we hope to speak with authority for America.

But philosophy must perforce be futile and sterile if there be

no public to which it can appeal; and where, in America, is the civic group ready to listen, even should we break through the bands of our pedagogy and seek to speak as men? Truly, it is thin and scattered; the average American has neither the zeal nor wit to follow strenuosities of reasonings remote from his obvious interests; at his best, where speculation is concerned, he is idly curious. Now this is not his fault (if it be a fault), nor altogether ours. He would reform, speedily enough, could he perceive the applicability of ideas to his affairs—that is, to his life, and the life of the state of which his is a part. And we should convince him of this application, were our speech not so foreign to him, and the gap between his interests and ours not so intellectually bridgeless. To some degree we are responsible; our pedagogy is responsible; for assuredly, if the teachers of philosophy were to succeed in college in impressing upon the minds of its students, not merely the intricacy but the tremendous social importance of speculative studies, we should soon have a public of our own making, ready to harken to, participate in, and spread philosophic knowledge. No doubt, in a great decentralized state, such as is the United States, this is vastly difficult; but it should not be impossible to such groups of men as are represented by our philosophical associations. Let them but begin publicly and collectively to address the nation, on such elementary matters as are subject of agreement with them, and in no long period they will be answered by the public interest.

For never in our history was there such an opportunity for the thinker as is now. A great war has been fought in Europe, and its end marks the close of that Renaissance which began with Petrarch and Erasmus, with Luther and Descartes, which upbuilt a high and superb idol of human nature, and which now beholds the ruins of its imaginings. The work of philosophy—which, throughout the ages, is the slow and deceitful labor of framing an adequate outward representation of man's ever undiscovered inward nature—is to begin anew, on new foundations, with new insights, to new ends. Politics, ethics, esthetics, metaphysics, psychology, too—all the old terms must be given refreshed meanings. The European Renaissance, with all its ideals, is now as closed a chapter of human history as is classical paganism or medieval Christianity (as closed, and living), and we are face to face with a new birth, a World Renaissance.

Pray do not mistake me; I do not prophesy. I am no blind believer in a fated "progress" (whatever that may mean) of all men; nor am I in the least confident that even the great economic and social alterations of men's condition which seem certain to come

will necessarily be accompanied by a genuine enlightenment of the spirit. For aught I know, we may be on the eve of such an inner darkening of mankind as no race yet has fared through. But being, in the poor professional way, a philosopher and a believer in philosophy, and having faith in the final power of American thought to find its genuine and effective expression, teaching others as it is taught by others, I can not abandon the great hope that the new age upon whose threshold we stand is to be an Age of Man in a more beautiful and spiritual sense than any which has preceded it. For now it is not Europe alone which brings the revelation; it is to be the whole world of Earth's men.

HARTLEY B. ALEXANDER.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA.

To the JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY:

The Serbian invitation opens stimulating possibilities for American philosophy. Philosophy, as we know, thrives most on doubt, perplexity, struggle. Where there is finality, philosophy shrivels up and dies. During the past two or three decades, there has been an illusive appearance of finality in our American life. We had achieved democracy. The long travail of the ages was at an end. What more was there to do? There were loose ends to be trimmed, no doubt, and ragged places to be tidied up. These were tasks for the lesser fellows—economists, sociologists, biologists, chemists, physicians, and so on—the engineers as over against the philosophers. The great principles were clear; the ultimate trends established. Philosophy, therefore, might retire on her well earned income and play epistemological chess games with herself for the rest of her life.

Of course the finality was an illusion. Democracy had not been achieved. Society ached and groaned for deliverance. Philosophy had been duped into a too easy acquiescence.

To attempt now to write or to help write a philosophy for Serbia is to plunge again into all the stimulating perplexities. It is to re-value what has been valued. It is to help build up from the ground and to build better.

Few tasks could be more salutary for American philosophy. Few tasks could more effectively rescue her from many of her latter day futilities.

I sincerely hope that the—all too flattering—invitation may be accepted by American philosophers.

H. A. OVERSTREET.

COLLEGE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.